(b) and (c) According to Assam State Electricity Board (ASEB), the funds have been sanctioned for completion of the following rural electrification programme:

(i) Intensive electrification of 912 villages already electrified.

(ii) Electrification of 493 virgin villages, intensification of 189 SC/ST villages.

(iii) Electrification of 20 tribal villages, out of which 11 villages are nearing completion.

ASEB have stated that for implementing the rural electrification programme, materials have already been procured and works are in progress.

ASEB have further stated that out of 24,685 total inhabited villages in Assam (1991 census), 19,019 villages have already been electrified leaving a balance of 5666 un-electrified villages. ASEB have stated that all these un-electrified villages are targeted to be completed by the end of 10th Plan period.

Installation of remote meters

†719. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to install remote meters, on the pattern of telephones, to check the losses suffered by the State Electricity Boards on account of electricity theft;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the cost of installing a remote meter; and

(c) the steps Government are going to take to bring about the qualitative improvement in electricity and to prevent power cuts and to make improvement of various equipments including transformers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) The Government of India has suggested various measures for reduction of T&D losses including the losses on account of electricity theft and the State Electricity Boards/Utilities have been advised to make use of modern technologies in metering including remote metering for accurate assessment and recording of electricity consumption.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) Remote metering would involve installation of electronic meter with facility for remote reading; communication system and receiving system. The cost of installing these facilities would depend upon the type and category of consumer, number of consumers, communication system adopted, area covered, and the time interval at which the information is sought etc.

(c) The Government of India has launched an Accelerated Power Development Programme (APDP) wherein financial assistance is provided to SEBs/Utilities for upgradation/strengthening of sub transmission & distribution systems, with the objectives of reducing T&D losses to around 15%, improvement in quality of power and increasing the reliability of power supply leading to greater customer satisfaction. The schemes being implemented under APDP include installation of meters at all levels of transformation and on all consumption, capacitor installation for power factor correction, reconductoring, bifurcation/sectionalisation of feeders and replacement/installation of Distribution Transformers, apart from measures to reduce commercial loss. Guidelines/Manuals for development/ improvement of sub-transmission & distribution systems on scientfic basis have also been prepared by an Expert Committee and are being circulated to the power utilities.

Pending clearance for captive power plants by CEA

720. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals for setting up captive power plants presently pending for clearance by CEA and State Governments/State Regulatory Commissions;

(b) whether Government have issued any special guidelines to States for power plant in Special Economic Zones (SEZ); and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) Under Section 44 of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948, the State Electricity Boards give consent to setting up of captive power plants by various industries. Consultation of Central Electricity Authority (CEA) is necessary only in cases where the capacity of the captive power project exceeds 25 MW. As on date, on complete Detailed Project Report for any captive power plant, is pending with CEA.